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State of Maine  
ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE  
COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

June 29, 2011

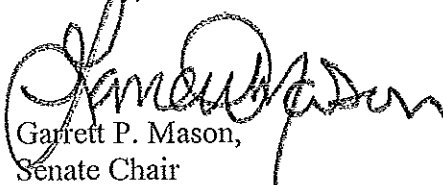
James T. Glessner, State Court Administrator  
Mary Ann Lynch, Director of Court Information  
Administrative Office of the Courts  
P.O. Box 4820  
Portland, Maine 04112

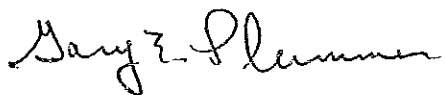
Dear Mr. Glessner and Ms. Lynch:

As you know, the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee recently considered LD 1438, An Act to Require Videoconferencing for Civil and Criminal Proceedings for Inmates. The committee unanimously voted ought not to pass on the bill on the condition that interested parties continue to work on this very important issue. We were pleased to learn at the work session that this work is currently ongoing. The committee and the Legislature have a strong interest in ensuring that the use of videoconferencing and related technology are enhanced to provide for greater efficiencies and safety for the courts, prosecutors, corrections officials, law enforcement and others involved in the criminal justice system.

We understand that there are issues related to implementation of system-wide changes related to costs, as well as potential constitutional issues as to when a defendant must appear in court in person. As was discussed in the committee work session on LD 1438, we ask that you, the Judicial Branch, please continue to coordinate work with the numerous stakeholders to further explore these issues and develop refined recommendations to move us further toward uniform and consistent use of videoconferencing technology in all the courtrooms in the State. We ask that you please report your recommendations to the committee, via our legislative analyst, Marion Hylan Barr in the Office of Policy and Legal Analysis, by December 1, 2011. This will give us adequate time to prepare further legislation, if it is necessary to implement your recommendations. Thank you in advance for your attention and continued work on this very important matter.

Sincerely,

  
Garrett P. Mason,  
Senate Chair

  
Rep. Gary E. Plummer  
House Chair

c: Hon. Leigh I. Saufley, Chief Justice, Maine Supreme Judicial Court

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Amy Fowler, President, Maine County Commissioners Association

Robert Howe, Maine County Commissioners Association

Sheriff Glenn Ross, President, Maine Sheriffs Association

Sheriff Donald Smith, Washington County Sheriff's Office

Lt. Mary Zidalis, Washington County Sheriff's Office

Col. Mark Westrum, President, Maine Jail Administrators Association

District Attorney Stephanie Anderson, President, Maine Prosecutors Association

District Attorney Norm Croteau, Vice President, Maine Prosecutors Association

District Attorney Geoff Rushlau, Vice President for Legislation, Maine Prosecutors Association

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